United Nations E/2008/SR.40

Economic and Social Council

Provisional

29 September 2008

Original: English

Substantive session of 2008
General segment

Provisional summary record of the 40th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 23 July 2008, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hoscheit (Vice-President) ..... (Luxembourg)

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In the absence of Mr. Mérorès (Haiti), Mr. Hoscheit (Luxembourg), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(e) Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations System (E/2008/53)

Economic and environmental questions (*continued*) (E/2008/77)

(k) Women and development (E/2008/27)

Social and human rights questions (E/2008/77)

(a) Advancement of women (E/2008/27, E/2008/53, E/2008/62, E/2008/73 and E/2008/91)

1. **Ms. Mayanja** (Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) said that the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 62/208, with its strong gender component, had shown governments' undiminished resolve to find effective, lasting solutions to the challenges of gender inequality and underdevelopment. The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 2008 high-level segment of the Council (E/2008/L.10) reflected the importance of gender equality to implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on sustainable development. The upcoming High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be held on 25 September 2008; the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha on 2 December 2008; the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ongoing review of system-wide coherence would provide opportunities to build on the progress achieved and to bridge the gap between policies and implementation.

2. Turning to the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2008/27), she said that the priority theme and the review theme of the Commission's fifty-second session — which had been, respectively, financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding — were relevant both to the Council's work and to implementation of the MDGs. While the 2002 Monterrey Consensus had recognized gender equality, women's empowerment and poverty eradication as development goals, it contained little in the way of concrete action plans or policy recommendations for meeting them. At the country level, policy initiatives in those areas often failed because insufficient resources were allocated to their implementation. The Commission's agreed conclusions on financing for gender equality and women's empowerment (E/CN.6/2008/L.8) suggested innovative ways to strengthen financing for those purposes.

3. The 2007 Global Monitoring Report: Confronting the Challenges of Gender Equality and Fragile States, prepared by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, made it clear that in implementing the MDGs, the global community was more focused on halving poverty and improving health and education than on Goal No. 3 ("Promote gender equality, and empower women"). Not only was that goal valuable in its own right as an important development objective, it was also key to achieving all the other goals.

4. Women's empowerment was also an essential element of the overall human rights regime. On 1 January 2008, responsibility for servicing the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had been transferred from the Division for the Advancement of Women to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Committee had held two sessions since that transfer, which had been completed smoothly.

5. Violence against women was high on the international agenda. The Secretary-General's campaign, Unite to End Violence against Women, had been launched on 25 February 2008 at the fifty-second session of the Commission. The campaign, which would end in 2015, affirmed the link between violence against women and girls and poverty reduction and development and provided a historic opportunity to galvanize action on one of the most widespread human rights violations. Recent United Nations action on the issue included the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 62/133 ("Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women") and 134 ("Eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations") and Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) ("Women and peace and

security"). However, despite those commitments by Member States and the United Nations system, violence against women continued to occur in all countries and at all stages of development. Much more needed to be done by States, international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, women and men in order to put an end to the problem.

6. Because women constituted the majority of the world's poorest people and were subject to discrimination, the impact of climate change — including drought, rising temperatures and extreme weather events — made it particularly difficult for them to re-establish their livelihoods. A ministerial round table breakfast on the topic of "Migration, environment and climate change: the gender perspective", organized by her Office, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and held on 2 July 2008, had explored the links among climate change, environmental degradation and migration.

7. She welcomed the Commission's decision to select climate change as the emerging issue for its most recent session, as well as the President's statement on the occasion of the special meeting of the Council on the global food crisis (E/2008/66) and his focus on agriculture in developing countries. Since women produced 40 to 80 per cent of agricultural outputs in Africa and Asia, gender equality should be central to the discussion of climate change and food security.

8. During the past year, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), which represented over 30 United Nations entities, had been the centre of the Organization's action on gender mainstreaming. Its mandates were prominent in the General Assembly's and the Council's resolutions on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and its task forces reflected its priorities: follow-up to the Secretary-General's aforementioned campaign, tracking financing for gender work, climate change and capacity-building for gender mainstreaming. The Network was making progress in implementing the system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and the strategy for gender mainstreaming, which had been adopted in October 2006 in order to close the gaps between policy and practice. It had adopted draft standards for the system-wide policy and strategy and United Nations country teams performance indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment in order to ensure a coherent, results-based and effective approach to gender mainstreaming at Headquarters and in the field.

9. The Network had given priority to system-wide capacity-building for all staff, gender experts and senior management and had organized joint workshops with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Network on Gender Equality, most recently in Paris in January 2008 on the topic of partnerships of multilateral and bilateral agencies in scaling up support to partner country efforts to achieve gender equality.

10. She paid tribute to Ms. Carmen Moreno, former Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), who had retired in June 2008. Successful completion of the INSTRAW Strategic Framework 2004-2007 had strategically positioned the Institute to contribute to the three pillars of the United Nations: development, peace and security and human rights. It had secured sufficient funds to finance its core activities in 2008 and to fully reimburse the subvention of $557,800 that it had received from the Organization's regular budget; voluntary contributions to its regular operations had also increased. However, it needed to ensure greater visibility of its work in order to sustain that trend.

11. With regard to progress in the system-wide coherence review, at the informal consultations of the General Assembly held on 16 May and 16 June 2008, Member States had requested, and the Deputy Secretary-General had submitted, a note dated 6 June 2008 on the United Nations system support to Member States on gender equality and women's empowerment. Member States had strongly reaffirmed that gender equality was central to achievement of the three pillars and that gaps and weaknesses in the Organization's support should be addressed effectively. In a letter dated 19 June 2008, the President of the General Assembly had conveyed to the Secretary-General, on behalf of the Permanent Representatives of Tanzania and Ireland as co-chairpersons on system-wide coherence, a request for a paper on institutional options to strengthen United Nations work on gender equality and women's empowerment; that paper would soon be completed.

12. Although the advancement of women was proceeding more slowly on some issues than she would

have wished, it was accelerating at both the national and international levels. While the primary responsibility for advancement lay at the national level, success also required a supportive international environment. Much had been achieved, but more needed to be done; the collective potential of the United Nations must be harnessed in support of Member States' implementation of their national gender equality strategies. The current session of the Council provided an opportunity to think creatively about ways to bridge the gap between commitments and implementation and to summon the necessary political will in light of the proposal that the Council's 2010 annual ministerial review should focus on promoting gender equality and empowering women.

13. **Ms. Abdelrahman** (Sudan) said that the report of the Secretary-General's on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2008/53) would help States take action to empower women and to allocate greater resources for that purpose.

14. The Sudan was deeply convinced of the need for such action at the regional and international levels. It was essential to ensure the implementation of United Nations decisions aimed at protecting the rights and dignity of women and achieving social justice. Those decisions needed to be integrated into national legal systems. The Sudan complied with General Assembly resolutions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and on combating the trafficking of women and girls, and welcomed the Beijing Declaration adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women. His Government believed that the dignity of women was the fundamental principle for such action and remained committed to its cultural and religious traditions, which called for the advancement and empowerment of women.

15. Women in the Sudan were asserting their constitutional rights and competing for senior political posts. The 2008 National Electoral Law established a 25 per cent quota for women members of parliament, an unprecedented achievement for women and the 2005 Transitional Constitution, adopted in the wake of the peace agreement between North and South, affirmed gender equality and non-discrimination. The Government of National Unity had worked to eliminate violence against women and to raise awareness of legal rights. Between 2002 and 2007, a national strategy had been in place in order to ensure practical application of the relevant laws. In 2007, parliament had enacted a National Women's Empowerment Policy. The Policy sought to provide educational opportunities for all girls, including those with special needs; to ensure women's participation in the drafting of laws on women's issues and in peacebuilding; and to encourage research, training and awareness-raising campaigns in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and with funding from the Organization. His delegation hoped that the relevant United Nations agencies would continue their valuable work in gender mainstreaming, and that donor States would provide funding for development goals, including the advancement and empowerment of women.

16. **Ms. Khioka** (Iraq) said that for decades, women in her country had been marginalized and had suffered injustice under dictatorial rule. Despite the challenges of the previous five years, and notably the global threat of terrorism, the country was moving towards freedom and democracy. Women were playing increasingly prominent roles underscored by the International Women of Courage Award, presented by the Secretary of State of the United States of America to Dr. Iman al-Juburi on 10 March 2008.

17. National strategies were in place to address women's issues. The new Iraqi Constitution, the most progressive in the region, granted full political rights and responsibilities to men and women alike and allowed women to leave the country without a male relative. It stressed the family, providing for social and health security, housing and minimum income, and stated that 25 per cent of members of parliament should be women. There were currently four women ministers, and women were increasingly represented in the foreign and diplomatic services.

18. Iraq looked forward to membership of the Council's Commission on the Status of Women from 2009 to 2013. A wide range of awareness-raising campaigns had been organized, including in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Awards were available for women of distinction.

19. Although Iraq had made substantial progress in gender equality issues in comparison with other Arab States, it s assistance from States and regional and

international organizations, and was grateful for the support that it had received.

20. **Mr. McMahan** (United States of America) said he regretted that at its current session, the Council had not had time to fully consider the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system (E/2008/53).

21. Since 2000, the United States of America had devoted over US$ 500 million to combating trafficking in persons, a practice that violated human rights, increased global health risks and fuelled the growth of organized crime. His delegation believed that the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, was the best multilateral tool for preventing trafficking, prosecuting traffickers and protecting the victims. It questioned the utility of any strategy or plan of action that duplicated the existing Protocol and would prefer to focus on improving its implementation by providing resources for technical assistance and strengthening the role of the Inter-Agency Cooperation Group Against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT).

22. During its June 2008 presidency of the Security Council and at the previous session of the General Assembly, his delegation had sponsored resolutions dealing with sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. He was gratified that those resolutions had been adopted and hoped that Member States and the United Nations system would take steps to implement them in full, together with other resolutions on violence against women and women's empowerment.

23. His Government also supported maternal health interventions related to pregnancy and childbirth around the world. In particular, it had increased funding for the prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula, an issue discussed at the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, from US$ 1 million to US$ 11 million between 2004 and 2007.

24. There were still too few women in high-level posts in the Organization; although the Secretary-General had appointed several women to head United Nations agencies, only one woman currently served as his special representative, none served as special envoys and few women held D-1 or D-2 posts. Greater efforts should be made to recruit highly qualified women candidates.

25. **Ms. Zhang** Dan (China) said that one of the most important issues facing the international community was that of ensuring that women participated equally in and benefited from development. In view of the impact of globalization, urbanization and other factors on those issues, the international community should fully implement the Monterrey Consensus by increasing gender awareness, reducing debt, opening markets, reforming international trade mechanisms, overcoming institutional barriers to financing for development and improving international partnerships.

26. In the context of its rapidly developing economy, her Government was emphasizing coherent social, economic and cultural development by focusing on improving livelihoods, promoting a harmonious society and creating a favourable environment for gender equality. In the past year, the Government had earnestly implemented the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century". It had also actively implemented the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, focusing on the MDGs, comprehensive improvement of the status of women and promotion of their participation in development.

27. For the first time, a separate chapter on the rights and interests of women had been included in China's national development plan. The Government was encouraging women to participate in public administration and priority was being given to providing them with non-agricultural training in order to improve their employment competitiveness. A national seminar on implementation of the Convention, at which Government ministries, women's organizations, the news media and United Nations representatives in China had participated, had been organized. New legislation was marked by a greater emphasis on gender issues; provisions on the protection of women's rights and interests were included in the new Personal Property Law and in the Law on Promoting Women's Employment and the State Council had issued a note on the prevention of domestic violence.

28. **Ms. Kulzhanova** (Kazakhstan) said that the outcome documents of the Fourth World Conference on

Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly had far-reaching significance. The Second Eurasian Summit of Women, organized by a Kazakh non-governmental organization (NGO) with support from the Government and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and held in Astana in June 2008, had demonstrated the success of the bottom-up approach. The Summit, which had been attended by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and over 400 women from the region, had provided an opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities for women's participation in economic activities and politics.

29. Although gender issues were central to development and to achievement of the MDGs, problems related to the status of women and gender equality were an ongoing concern. Women continued to have unequal access to resources and opportunities and to be subjected to abuse, poverty and discrimination. They should be given an equal opportunity to participate in economic development, by providing them with capacity-building and access to microcredit, particularly in rural areas, and by analysing and bridging wage gaps. Gender-sensitive budgeting was an effective tool for improving the status of women, especially those living in poverty.

30. In order to increase the number of women in decision-making posts, efforts should be made to facilitate the reconciliation of work and personal or family life by offering child and dependent care, parental leave and flexible working schemes for both men and women. It was also important to incorporate a gender perspective into national legislation and policies and into the development programmes of United Nations agencies, making the necessary budget allocations.

31. The issue of the advancement of women was multifaceted and included the need to combat violence and trafficking in persons. Climate change and food crises could also pose a threat to achievement of the MDGs. Gender equality issues must become an intrinsic part of the agenda and daily activities of all United Nations bodies, including the Secretariat. Her delegation looked forward to reading the Secretary-General's report on the new United Nations gender architecture and hoped that it would adequately reflect both the need to improve the existing system and the challenges that lay ahead.

32. **Ms. Park** Enna (Republic of Korea) said that achieving gender equality and women's empowerment was one of the core mandates of the United Nations as a critical prerequisite for attaining the MDGs, ensuring the universal enjoyment of human rights and dignity and addressing global challenges such as poverty, environmental degradation, epidemics and armed conflicts. Her delegation welcomed efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into all United Nations agencies and agendas and to prevent violence against women, including through the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security; the launching of the Secretary-General's campaign, Unite to End Violence against Women; and the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict initiative.

33. The round table discussion on the topic of "The role of the Economic and Social Council in addressing violence against women in all its forms and manifestations: A dialogue with the chairpersons of the functional commissions", held on 8 July 2008 during the Council's coordination segment, had provided a meaningful opportunity to discuss the issue of violence against women. Because that problem constituted not only a violation of human dignity but a major impediment to gender equality and the empowerment of women, it should be addressed across the entire United Nations system, including the functional commissions. Her Government supported the Council's continued role in identifying the complementarity of those commissions on such issues and in reaffirming Member States' political will to promote the advancement of women.

34. Her delegation strongly supported the proposal to appoint an under-secretary-general for gender equality and empowerment of women in order to ensure gender mainstreaming at the highest levels of decision-making and to oversee and guide other bodies, as well as any proposal to strengthen the Organization's existing gender entities through increased capacity and funding. Concerning the proposal to consolidate the three existing entities, her delegation considered that the hybrid model proposed in the Deputy Secretary-General's concept note, dated 1 August 2007, on a strengthened architecture for gender equality and empowerment of women would provide a more coordinated structure and result in greater coherence than could be achieved through consolidation. Other options should not be excluded, provided that they

addressed the current overall weakness in coordination and coherence, accountability and resources.

35. Lastly, her delegation valued the agreed conclusions of the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the priority theme of financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, it hoped that the outcome of that session would provide a foundation for Member States' integration of a gender perspective into national budgets and resource mobilization.

36. **Ms. Fedorovich** (Belarus) said that her delegation welcomed the Organization's expanded activities aimed at ensuring gender equality. The increased efforts by States and United Nations agencies in that area were an encouraging trend. Gender equality and expansion of the rights of women were a policy priority in Belarus, which allocated considerable resources for those purposes.

37. Women in her country were well represented in the Government, directed large companies and banks and played an active role in business. More than 20 women's organizations dealt with the issue of gender equality. Women in Belarus were traditionally well educated; 25 per cent of them had a higher education, as opposed to 20 percent of men, and they accounted for 51 per cent of the nation's scientists.

38. A key aspect of ensuring gender equality was combating trafficking in persons, and Belarus would continue to work consistently to broaden the Organization's activities in that field. The key to success was to enhance coordination of work by States, the United Nations agencies and the civil sector. An action plan clearly setting forth the tasks to be achieved would be an important instrument for improving such coordination.

39. It was also essential to enhance the Council's role in combating trafficking in persons and dealing with other aspects of gender equality. Lastly, her country supported the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and stressed the need to increase coordination between the Commission and other bodies that promoted the rights of women, including INSTRAW.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session (E/2008/27)

Agreed conclusions on financing gender equality and the empowerment of women

40. **The President** drew attention to Chapter I, Section A, of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session (E/2008/27), which contained agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission for transmittal to the General Assembly as an input into the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to transmit the agreed conclusions to the General Assembly.

41. *It was so decided.*

Draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women"

42. **The President** drew attention to Chapter I, Section B, of the report, which contained a draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women". The draft resolution had been adopted by the Commission by a recorded vote of 33 to 1, with 9 abstentions. A roll-call vote had been requested.

43. **Ms. Eilon Shahar** (Observer for Israel), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that the draft resolution was an annual, politically motivated initiative that ignored the reality on the ground, it was also the Commission's only geographically or politically specific draft resolution. If the drafters had had a genuine interest in helping Palestinian women, they would have mentioned the oppressive internal conditions imposed by the patriarchal bias embedded in Palestinian society and the associated domestic and gender-based violence, overt discrimination, female genital mutilation and honour killings.

44. In its recent report, "A Question of Security: Violence against Palestinian Women and Girls", Human Rights Watch had written that there were discriminatory laws that condoned and perpetrated such violence and that there were virtually no institutionalized policies to prevent it, assist the victims and hold the perpetrators accountable. Her Government supported efforts to improve the quality of life of Palestinian women and to offer them assistance. However, because the draft resolution did not address

the internal situation of human rights abuses or the suffering caused by Palestinian terrorism, it left much to be desired. She called on delegations to oppose it.

45. **Ms. Phipps** (United States), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that the resolution was unbalanced, expressing concern about the victims of only one side of a protracted conflict. While it criticized Israel, which tried to distinguish between civilians and combatants in the course of its military activities, it ignored the purposeful targeting of civilians by Palestinian terrorists. Her delegation was deeply concerned about the impact of the current humanitarian crisis on Palestinian women and children, and on the entire Palestinian population. It deeply regretted both that Palestinian civilians had lost their lives during the recent clashes in the Gaza Strip and that Israelis, including women and children, had suffered and died from Palestinian terrorist attacks.

46. The United States of America was the largest bilateral donor to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), with contributions totaling more than $154 million in 2007. It also contributed significant amounts to many other international organizations providing assistance to Palestinian women and to the entire Palestinian population, as well as providing bilateral assistance to the Palestinian Authority in order to empower Palestinians economically.

47. Her delegation would vote against to the draft resolution, however, because it was unfair, unbalanced, and inconsistent with the universalist values of the Council. Moreover, sensitive permanent status issues such as those involving refugees should be resolved through negotiations between the two parties. Her Government was committed to working with the Quartet and with States of the region to move both parties towards the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The focus of the international community should be on helping both parties to maintain progress towards that objective. One-sided resolutions only served to undermine the ability of the United Nations to play a constructive role in the situation, making less attainable the peace that, more than anything else, would improve the lot of Palestinian women and of everyone caught up in the conflict.

48. *The vote was taken by roll-call.*

49. *Greece, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.*

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Congo, Cuba, El Salvador, Haiti, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sudan.

Against:

Canada, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Austria, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Moldova, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

50. *The draft resolution was adopted by 25 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.**

51. **Ms. Rasheed** (Observer for Palestine) expressed her thanks to those delegations that had voted in favour of the draft resolution, which had reaffirmed respect for international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law at a time when the Palestinian people were facing heightened poverty, health-related issues, and the violation of their human rights and dignity.

52. The statement made by the representative of Israel distorted the context of the occupation while ignoring Israel's violations and crimes. It was shocking to speak as if Israel did not commit human rights violations and carry out unlawful policies and practices against the Palestinian people and as if it were not an occupying power of an entire people and a colonizer of their land. If Israel could not acknowledge its crimes and wrongdoings, how could it ever cease them and make amends?

53. It was also wrong for the delegation of Israel to comment on the internal Palestinian situation. The Palestinians did not comment on or meddle in Israel's internal political, economic or social affairs, despite the existence of sexual violence and discrimination by

* The delegations of the Philippines and Uruguay subsequently informed the Council that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

high-level officials, corruption, discrimination and other crimes.

54. Israel should stop trying to exploit the current situation to its own advantage, which could in no way benefit the cause of promoting peace and reconciliation Instead, it should focus on complying with the law, upholding its legal obligations as an occupying power and truly engaging in the peace process with a view to an end to the disastrous occupation and a peaceful settlement.

Draft decision entitled "Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-third session of the Commission"

55. **The President** drew the attention of the Council to Chapter I, Section C, of the report, which contained a draft decision entitled "Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-third session of the Commission".

56. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Council) drew attention to two amendments to the documentation for the fifty-third session of the Commission as listed in the draft decision. In paragraph 3 (c), the reference to the report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation should be deleted as that document had been requested for the fifty-fourth session of the Commission and a document entitled "Future work of the Working Group on Communications" should be added to paragraph 4.

57. *The draft decision was adopted.*

Regional cooperation (*continued*)

58. **The President** drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2008/15 and Add.1 and 2) and to documents entitled "The economic situation in the Economic Commission for Europe region: Europe, North America and the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2007-2008" (E/2008/16), "Overview of the economic and social conditions in Africa 2008" (E/2008/17), "Summary of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2008" (E/2008/18), "Latin America and the Caribbean: economic situation and outlook, 2007-2008" (E/2008/19) and "Summary of the economic and social developments in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia region, 2007-2008" (E/2008/20). If there was no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to take note of those documents.

59. *It was so decided*

Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(d) Long-term programme of support for Haiti (*continued*)

Draft resolution entitled "Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti" (E/2008/L.15)

60. **The President** drew attention to draft resolution E/2008/L.15 entitled, "Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti".

61. **Ms. Pliner** (Secretary of the Council), speaking on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution, said that under the terms of paragraphs 7, 8 and 10, the Council would decide to extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group until the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 2009, stressing the need to avoid overlap and duplication with respect to existing mechanisms; express its satisfaction to the Secretary-General for the support provided to the Advisory Group and request him to continue to support the Group's activities adequately and within existing resources; and request the Advisory Group to submit a report on its work, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Council at its substantive session of 2009. The support to be provided to the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would consist of travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses for a mission to Haiti in April 2009. The resource requirements for that mission were estimated at US$ 13,500 (US$ 11,500 for four members of the Advisory Group and US$ 2,000 for one staff member of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs), for which funds had not been provided in the programme budget for 2008-2009.

62. In his report on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive and resumed substantive sessions of 2007 (A/62/515), which contained similar requests, the Secretary-General had informed the General Assembly that all possible efforts would be made to meet the estimated requirements of US$ 13,500 under Section 9,

Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 together with extrabudgetary funds. The April 2008 mission to Haiti had been cancelled. It was proposed that the requirements of US $13,500 for 2009 should be met in a similar manner.

63. On the basis of experience thus far in the 2008-2009 biennium, and since the estimated financing needed for activities requested in the draft resolution did not exceed US$ 13,500, all possible efforts would be made to meet those requirements as envisaged in the report of the Secretary-General. Accordingly, no additional appropriation would be required or sought from the General Assembly should the Council adopt the draft resolution.

64. *Draft resolution E/2008/L.15 was adopted.*

65. **Mr. Mérorès** (Haiti) expressed his country's gratitude at the adoption of the resolution, which was consistent with his Government's efforts to take a long-term approach to the country's development problems. While there was certainly a long way to go before those problems could be resolved, notably through long-term agricultural development, adoption of the resolution was a step in the right direction. He also expressed his Government's gratitude to countries that contributed to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.